

THE BIBLE, MY BELIEFS, AND COUNSELING

What Does the Bible Says About Counseling

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*Good observation, agree*

On the one hand, I have noticed since the 1980's that, pastors and pastoral counselors tend to discard the use of biblical and theological terms when they assess their clients, using instead the psychological language to make their approach. It is as if they give more value to the secular-scientific finding rather than to the biblical-pastoral conditions of their clients. Thus, they see anxiety, depression, obsession compulsion, and other disorders, and try to cure them using the instruments that the psychology provides to treat them. Parishioners and clients solicit their counseling services, because they represent the presence and will of God in regard to their personal problems. Nevertheless, the whole approach they do is based on the psychology's research and methods, which is a mistake when there are many resources that can successfully use when counseling has a pastoral approach.

On the other hand, I noticed with the same astonishment that, some counselors rely only and exclusively on the Bible. Thus, they reject every knowledge, finding, research, and method established by the sciences. This is the case of Dr. Adams' Nouthetic School that embraces the Bible as the only guide for counseling and rejects the science in all its forms. I know that the Bible was given to me as a guide for salvation and living. However, the action of God is not finished. The Holy Spirit is in constant movement to renew the life of the church, providing the sciences as a gift for our own good and comfort.

Since I am preparing to be a clinical pastoral counselor and the people will know it before soliciting my services, I expect that my clients will come to <sup>in</sup> my office looking for my clinical skills in addition to blessing and healing, reconciliation and conversion,

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sanctification and fellowship. Moreover, I as a counselor am going to see my clients as a whole, their physical and spiritual needs, and the state of their relationship with God and the community of faith, all with idea of restoring them to a full communion with Him.

Actually we are in need of good counselors, men and women that are honest and capable, who have values grounded in the Bible to sustain not only the families, but also the American society. The book of Proverbs sheds light on one of the main function of counselors. It says, "For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure (Pr. 11:14)," and "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed (Pr. 15:22)" Our main concern as counselors is not only the individuals and their families. Before God we also are responsible to counsel and guide our society and the whole world in the measure that we can. In times of crisis as the one we live now, the counselor and therapists should be prophets that raise their voices to request that all the war captives in the hands of our troops be treated with compassion, respect, and dignity.

I do not think that our task is limited to the family that we help within the small rooms of our family practice office. As we have to go and preach the gospels to the end of the earth, so we have to wonder if our troops that are stationed on Iraq have chaplains with sound and well grounded Scriptural knowledge, to properly guide our military men toward a behavior that is acceptable according the struggle they face. Thus, we as counselors and therapists are not only responsible for our country. To some extent, the whole world is our responsibility. It is really shameful to see the images of naked-undignified captive soldiers on the media, though I thank God for their disclosure. Our God is God of the entire world and not only of the Christians. The Messiah is pictured by

the prophet as "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6)"

I have a dream since I enrolled in the MFCP. I want to go to the private practice as soon as I graduate. However, I am going to advertise myself as a clinical pastoral therapist. I want that my clients know at front that, I am a Christian counselor and a pastor working as a therapist. It is my call, my ministry, my life. I am going to see in my work the work of God, who will be ultimately the only responsible of my success, if I get one. I am going to start my work everyday with prayer and reading of the Scriptures; I am going to set apart some minutes everyday to make reflection about my finitude and His greatness, my inaptitude and His skills, my poorness and His riches. In a word, I am going to continue being His servant and the servant of my clients.

*Sacrific paper.*  
(20)